



**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**November 3, 2005**

**For immediate release**

- 1. Clean-up at Princeton marsh nearly complete, but still seeking vandals**
- 2. Apply manure according to plan**
- 3. Fairfield bypass shows importance of remote alarms**
- 4. DNR asks for input on water operator certification program**

## **CLEAN-UP AT PRINCETON MARSH NEARLY COMPLETE, BUT STILL SEEKING VANDALS**

PRINCETON – Clean-up at the north pool of the Princeton State Wildlife Management Area was completed last week, but the vandals who leaked diesel fuel into the marsh have not been identified.

Clean-up costs for the wildlife refuge are estimated at \$18,000, including the cost of a private contractor, soil removal, and the booms and absorbent pads that contained and collected the fuel. The contractor had to push heavy vegetation under water to float off the diesel fuel residue.

“Several local people have expressed anger toward the vandals who pulled the plug from a diesel fuel tank,” said Terry Jones, an environmental specialist from the Washington DNR field office. “We are still looking for information about the vandals.”

Quad City Crimestoppers is also offering an award of up to \$1,000 for information that leads to an arrest. Jones urges anyone with information to call the Quad City Crimestoppers at (309) 762-9500. Callers can remain anonymous.

The DNR will keep booms in place to soak up residual fuel, but normal pumping resumed this week. Jones added that long-term impacts on the vegetation aren't clear yet, but that eventually any remaining diesel fuel will break down through natural processes.

The wildlife refuge is flooded every fall to provide resting and feeding areas for migrating waterfowl. As the area is flooded, dilution should help with any lingering fuel.

The DNR discovered the four-acre diesel fuel spill on the afternoon of Oct. 24. Over the weekend, vandals had pulled the plug from a 250-gallon fuel tank used for pumping water into the area.

Call Ed Kocal, DNR conservation officer, at (563) 349-8953, or the Quad City Crimestoppers if you have any information, or saw someone on or near the refuge over the weekend of Oct. 22.

**For more information, contact Ed Kocal at (563) 349-8953 or Terry Jones at the Washington DNR field office, at (319) 653-2135.**

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## **APPLY MANURE ACCORDING TO PLAN**

DES MOINES –Commercial and private manure applicators are urged to follow plans for land application of manure because they make sense both economically and environmentally.

“These plans are specific to the operation and designed to effectively use the nutrients in the manure, while protecting the environment,” said Cindy Martens, environmental specialist at the Spencer DNR field office.

“So far this season, we haven’t seen many environmental problems with manure application, but that’s partly because it’s been so dry this fall,” added Ken Hessenius, supervisor of the Spencer office.

Hessenius said that he would like to remind producers and commercial applicators to comply with manure management plans and to watch out for rain in the weather forecast.

“Taking an afternoon off because of rain in the forecast is well worth it, if it helps you avoid manure run-off into a tile inlet, road ditch or stream, and the possibility of facing a water quality violation or fish kill,” said Hessenius.

Following required setbacks from streams, tile intakes, other environmentally-sensitive areas and neighbors can also help applicators avoid a spill or complaints.

Martens advise all applicators to make sure they review a copy of the manure management plan and the application rates for each field before starting the job.

“Don’t assume that the rates and fields are the same as they were last year, especially as we move to more phosphorus-based plans,” she said. “And, if there is something that you don’t understand about the plan, you should ask questions about it.”

“Getting in a hurry and faulty equipment are two of the main causes of accidents,” said Hessenius. Routinely inspecting equipment can help prevent breakdowns or accidents that could lead to manure accidentally reaching a stream.”

Applicators should call the state's 24-hour spill line at (515) 281-8694 if they have a spill.

Commercial applicators should also make sure that they have the proper signage with three-inch high letters on any vehicles that travel public roads. Although it's not an environmental problem, lack of signage can be an enforcement problem, said Hessenius.

More information about manure application and plans for manure management can be found on the DNR Web site at <http://www.iowadnr.com/afo/landapp.html>.

**For more information, contact Ken Hessenius or Cindy Martens at (712) 262-4177.**

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## **FAIRFIELD BYPASS SHOWS IMPORTANCE OF REMOTE ALARM SYSTEMS**

FAIRFIELD — A recent wastewater bypass from a Fairfield lift station has shown the importance of using remote alarm systems.

The lift station lost power sometime after 9 a.m. Sunday, leading to a bypass of an unknown amount of wastewater to nearby Cedar Creek. The city stopped the bypass at 7:30 a.m. Monday. However, the bypass was not reported to the DNR until 12:30 p.m. Tuesday. All bypasses caused by mechanical failures must be reported to the DNR within 12 hours of onset or discovery. The city has cleaned and disinfected the area.

The lift station does not have an alarm system to alert off-site operators of a power failure. According to current DNR design standards for new or renovated lift stations, lift stations must have two power sources, a backup pump, audio and visual alarms at the lift station, and an alarm that notifies someone off-site of a problem. The Fairfield lift station was installed prior to when these standards went into effect. However, the city does have plans scheduled for upgrades that will meet the DNR's standards.

"This is a clear example of why we require remote alarm systems in our new design standards," said Russell Royce, an environmental specialist in the DNR's Washington field office.

Royce added that if residents in any town notice an audio or visual alarm at a nearby lift station, they should contact the city. The lift station may have alarms at the lift station, but no remote device to notify someone off-site.

The DNR will consider possible enforcement action.

**For more information, contact Russell Royce at (319) 653-2135.**

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## **DNR ASKS FOR INPUT ON WATER OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

DES MOINES — At public meetings around the state, the DNR will be looking for Iowans' input on the five-year strategic plan for the DNR's water and wastewater operator certification program.

In 1998, the DNR contracted with the Iowa Water Pollution Control Association (IWPCA) and the Iowa American Water Works Association (IAWAA) to develop a five-year strategic plan for the water and wastewater operator certification program. That plan was approved and published in February 1999. To date, the DNR has accomplished many of those goals.

The DNR again contracted with the IWPCA and IAWWA in 2005 to review the progress made and to upgrade the plan to reflect the current status, future direction and needs of operators and certification program in Iowa. The two associations invited participation from stakeholder organizations, and the Work Group began meeting in March 2005. In July the Work Group presented the DNR with a draft five year strategic plan.

The DNR is now seeking to share this information and to seek further operator and public input. In addition to the meetings listed below, the draft plan is available for review and public comment at [www.iowadnr.com/water/opcert.html](http://www.iowadnr.com/water/opcert.html). Written comments may be submitted before Dec. 16, 2005, to Laurie Sharp at [laurie.sharp@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:laurie.sharp@dnr.state.ia.us) or mailed to 401 SW 7<sup>th</sup> St, Suite M, Des Moines, IA 50309.

The meeting schedule follows:

Atlantic  
Dec. 9, 9 a.m.  
Atlantic Public Library, 507 Poplar St.  
Meeting Room

Cedar Rapids  
Dec. 8, 9 a.m.  
Kirkwood Community College, 6301 Kirkwood Blvd. SW  
Emergency Operations Center (Environmental Training Center), Room 125

Des Moines  
Nov. 30, 6 p.m.  
DNR Water Supply offices, 401 SW Seventh St., Suite I  
North and South conference rooms

Eddyville  
Dec. 5, 6 p.m.  
Indian Hills Bio Process Training Center, 17601 Monroe-Wapello Rd.  
Rooms 104 B,C, and D

Mason City  
Nov. 29, 9 a.m.  
North Iowa Area Community College, 500 College Dr.  
Muse-Norris Center, Room 180 A-D

Storm Lake  
Dec. 1, 9 a.m.  
Arrowhead Area Education Agency, 824 Flindt Drive  
Large Conference Room

**For more information, contact Laurie Sharp at (515) 725-0284 or  
[Laurie.Sharp@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:Laurie.Sharp@dnr.state.ia.us).**

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